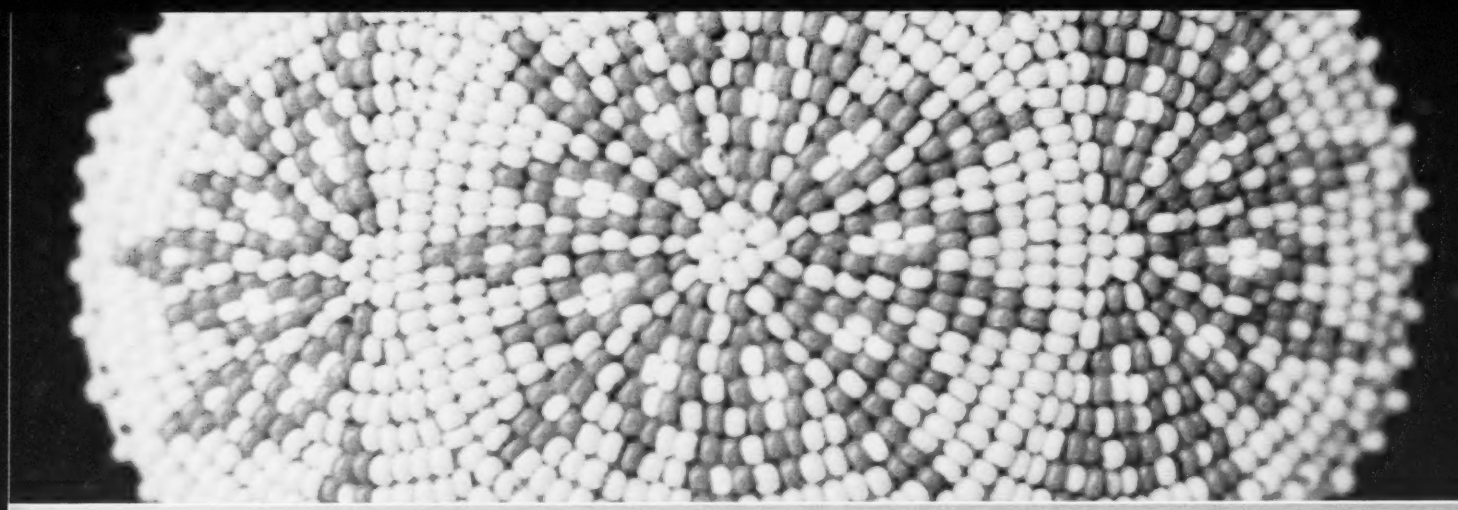

BRITISH COLUMBIA

New Relationships with Aboriginal People and Communities in British Columbia

ANNUAL REPORT ON PROGRESS 2011 - 2012

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Introduction

On behalf of many partners across government, the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation has prepared the *2011-12 Annual Report on Progress: New Relationships with Aboriginal People and Communities in British Columbia*.

The report provides a snapshot of progress made toward the goals of the *New Relationship* and the commitments under the *Transformative Change Accord* and the *Métis Nation Relationship Accord*. It also includes a summary of key accomplishments since 2005, future strategies, and measures for monitoring progress.

The report contains examples of the *New Relationship*, as well as the ***BC Jobs Plan***, in action, such as:

- Continued development of Aboriginal and community-driven governance structures to ensure First Nations and Aboriginal communities are leading and designing their own service delivery.
- Sustainable employment opportunities created through programs that provide job-related training, support services, mentoring and apprenticeships to Aboriginal people, including youth.
- Significant progress toward achieving the ***BC Jobs Plan*** goal of 10 agreements with First Nations by 2015 through the signing of strategic engagement agreements, reconciliation agreements and the first-ever woodland license.
- The Collaboration to End Violence: National Aboriginal Women's Forum co-hosted by the B.C. government and the Native Women's Association of Canada.
- Investments in clean energy projects, through funding to support technology projects, job training, business plans, joint ventures, and community energy planning in First Nations communities.

There are many inspiring and promising initiatives taking place across British Columbia. This report is a way to acknowledge those initiatives, and to demonstrate the progress and commitment of Aboriginal people and communities, working in partnership with the province, are achieving in support of Aboriginal people meeting their social and economic goals.

The *New Relationship* is a vision for a new government-to-government relationship based on respect, recognition and accommodation of Aboriginal title and rights. In November 2005, the province, Canada, and the First Nations Leadership Council (the *BC Assembly of First Nations*, the *First Nations Summit*, and the *Union of BC Indian Chiefs*) signed the *Transformative Change Accord* (TCA). The purpose of the TCA is to close the social and economic gaps between First Nations and other British Columbians, reconcile Aboriginal rights and title with those of the Crown, and establish a new relationship based upon mutual respect and reconciliation.

In May 2006, the province and the Métis Nation British Columbia signed the *Métis Nation Relationship Accord* (MNRA). A formalization of the relationship between the province and the Métis people of British Columbia, the MNRA identifies mutual goals, including collaborative efforts to close the quality-of-life gap that exists between the Metis people compared with other British Columbians.

Government maintains a commitment to measure and report on progress. *Measuring Outcomes* is the companion report to this document and provides quantitative measures of progress on closing the social and economic gaps in Crown–Aboriginal relationships, education, housing and infrastructure, health and economic opportunities.

Crown-Aboriginal Relationships

Working in partnership with Aboriginal leaders, organizations, communities and individuals, the province is building relationships across sectors. These relationships form the basis for important steps to be taken toward reconciliation and healing between the province and Aboriginal peoples, leading to the realization of healthy, prosperous, sustainable and self-determining communities for First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and urban Aboriginal people.

2011-12 Highlights

Treaties & Other Agreements

- The treaty process moved forward with:
  - *The **Tla'amin Final Agreement**, initialled by the Tla'amin Nation, Canada and the province on October 12, 2011.*
  - *The **Yale First Nation Final Agreement Act** passed on June 2, 2011.*
  - *The K'ómoks First Nation Agreement-in-Principle (AIP), signed March 24, 2012.*
  - *For more information on treaty agreements, see the Treaty section of the report.*

- Two strategic agreements were signed:
  - *The $1.3-million **Kaska Dena Council Strategic Engagement Agreement** outlines agreed-to levels of engagement creating certainty for resource development, which in turn results in economic benefits, such as shorter timelines for reviewing resource permits.*
  - ***Wóoshtin yan too.aat /Land and Resource Management and Shared Decision Making Agreement** is a government-to-government agreement worth up to $650,000 between the province and Taku River Tlingit First Nation that establishes a collaborative framework for the implementation of the Atlin Taku Land Use Plan and ongoing land and resource decision-making in Taku River Tlingit First Nation territory.*

- The province signed new reconciliation agreements:
  - *The **Nanwakolas Reconciliation Protocol** (signed July 29, 2011) creates new partnerships on Vancouver Island and the Mid-Coast with the Nanwakolas First Nations, and establishes agreement on carbon offset sharing, revenue sharing and other economic measures and strategies that assist First Nations achieve progress toward socio-economic objectives.*
  - *The **Coastal First Nations Amended Reconciliation Protocol**. The Haisla Nation become the seventh First Nation to sign the Coastal First Nations Reconciliation Protocol, which will create economic opportunities for their communities and increase certainty over the coastal land base for First Nations, industry and government.*

- The ***Sts'ailes Memorandum of Understanding*** was signed by the province and the Sts'ailes establishing a framework for collaboration and working together on diverse initiatives including forestry opportunities, road trespass, land exchanges, hydroelectric projects, tourism, conservation, co-ordinated consultation, child and family services, and health care. These commitments form the basis for future government-to-government agreements.

Children, Youth & Families

- Nine First Nations of southern Vancouver Island, along with Leadership of the Urban Aboriginal Community and the Province of British Columbia, signed a ***Child and Family Wellness Accord***. The Accord outlines an agreement to work on a government-to-government basis and in the spirit of recognition and reconciliation to achieve the vision of an integrated and holistic children and families services system, based upon the strengths, customs and traditional practice, for the care and well-being of the children of the communities of the South Island.
- The Ministry of Children and Family Development continued to support 15 indigenous approaches, which involved more than 100 First Nations working on the development and design of child welfare service based on their traditions and culture.
- Each of the Ministry of Children and Family Development service regions continued to advance a reconciliation process with Aboriginal communities throughout the province. The reconciliation processes were established based on the Touchstones of Hope or other reconciliation processes.

Culture and Arts

- The BC Arts Council allocated $480,000 to the ***First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council*** (FPHLCC) for the 2011/12 ***Aboriginal Arts Development Awards*** (AADA), which included Emerging Individual Artists, Organizations and Collectives, Sharing Traditional Arts-Inter-generational transmission and Arts Administrator Internships and Mentorships. The New Relationship Trust augmented support to the latter two programs with $150,000.
- The BC Arts Council, through its Artists in Education (District Allocations program), provided $12,363 to the First Nations Schools Association.
- Through the FPHLCC, 10 new language communities established ***FirstVoices*** dictionary/phrase apps for the iPod/iPad/iPhone.

Justice and Community Services

- The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation (MARR), in partnership with the ***Native Women's Association of Canada***, co-hosted the successful ***Collaboration to End Violence: National Aboriginal Women's Forum***. More than 250 delegates attended from across Canada, including provincial, territorial, and federal government representatives along with national Aboriginal organizations, agencies and community practitioners. The forum focused on sharing promising practices in the areas of prevention, intervention and post-incident response.
- Approximately 100 Aboriginal justice workers from 36 communities have been trained to facilitate offender programs in substance abuse management and domestic violence. Aboriginal facilitators deliver these programs in their communities in co-operation with probation officers with a specific focus on cultural programming.
- The Corrections Branch of the Ministry of Justice invested approximately $1.6 million in 36 locally based Aboriginal Justice Strategy Programs. ***Aboriginal Justice Strategy Programs*** are supporting community-based justice programs in communities throughout British Columbia to reduce the rates of victimization and incarceration among Aboriginal people and helping the justice system become more responsive to the cultural needs of Aboriginal people and are helping communities.
- In 2011, the ***First Nations Community Policing Service*** had 108.5 officers to provide enhanced policing services to 130 First Nation communities in B.C. through 53 Community Tripartite Agreements.

- The Corrections Branch of the Ministry of Justice invested approximately $1.3 million in the ***Native Courtworker and Counselling Association of BC***. The ***Native Courtworker Program*** helps Aboriginal people involved in the criminal justice system to obtain fair, just, equitable and culturally sensitive treatment. This program is located in 28 British Columbia communities and serves 74 per cent of the province's courthouses.

Developing Indigenous Child Services System

The leadership of the nine south First Nations and urban Aboriginal community, known as the South Island Wellness Society and the Province of B.C. signed a historic child and family wellness accord December 15, 2011, that will forge a relationship to design and develop an Indigenous child services system for the care and protection of Aboriginal children, youth and families.

"This agreement formalizes not only the political commitment of our nations and the province to work together for our children, but more importantly, this day stands as a sacred commitment to our ancestors, to our children and families of today and to our future generations that as leaders of our nations, the care and protection of our children and families has and will always be at the centre of our work, our hearts and our nations," said Chief Bruce Underwood, Pauquachin First Nations and chair of the South Island Wellness Society.

This accord recognizes that First Nations on the South Island are in the best position to lead the creation of a culturally based service system for the care and protection of Indigenous children, families and communities. The agreement will be carried out through annual work plans between chiefs and government.

"This accord is the result of years of collaboration and partnership between South Island First Nations and the B.C. government," said former Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister Mary Polak. "Led by the communities themselves, this agreement will uphold the traditional practices for the care and protection of the Aboriginal children and families of this region."

The accord is founded on the 2008 commitment made under traditional Coast Salish law between First Nations and the province to work together for children. Since that time, significant work has been done to reach the signing of this accord.

Social Innovation

- The BC Social Innovation Council was established in January 2011 to develop recommendations that would assist government in seeking new and innovative ways to help B.C. communities tackle the most intractable social challenges of the day. The Council was drawn from government, Aboriginal and community organizations, and business agencies with an interest in social entrepreneurship, including credit unions, foundations, academics, local and provincial government, investors, social entrepreneurs and innovators.

Off Reserve Aboriginal Action Plan

The October 3, 2011, throne speech acknowledged the importance of the off-reserve Aboriginal population and noted that:

> "With increased movement of Aboriginal people into urban centres comes the opportunity to strengthen and align our efforts with urban Aboriginal communities. The government will work with Aboriginal partners, the federal government and local governments to develop an off-reserve Aboriginal action plan to achieve better education and job training, healthier family life, and strengthened cultures and traditions".

The Strategy for the Future

British Columbia remains committed to negotiating and implementing treaties and other lasting agreements as an expression of reconciliation.

Other important work is planned over the next year:

- MARR implemented the commitment made by Minister Polak at the end of the Collaboration to End Violence: the National Aboriginal Women's Forum in 2011 to create a Minister's Advisory Council on Aboriginal Women (MACAW). The MACAW has developed a draft Strategic Plan and is engaged with MARR on the implementation of future steps.
- Working together with justice partners, Aboriginal communities and other stakeholders, the Corrections Branch of the Ministry of Justice will work toward the goals in the Ministry of Justice Corrections Branch Aboriginal Strategic Plan.
- British Columbia's government will work with Aboriginal partners, the federal government and local governments to develop an Off-Reserve Aboriginal Action Plan (ORAAP). The plan will reflect a community-driven and multi-stakeholder approach, intended to improve socio-economic outcomes for Aboriginal people in key areas, including health, education, housing, employment and justice.
- The B.C. government will work with Aboriginal partners, business, non-profit sectors and ministries across government to implement the ***BC Social Innovation Council Action Plan*** through 2012-2013, including developing a targeted strategy to build social entrepreneurship and social innovation capacity in B.C. First Nations and Aboriginal communities.

Building Skills with Aboriginal Youth Workers

"Working with Aboriginal Youth to turn dreams into opportunities." That was the message behind B.C.'s first Aboriginal Youth Workers Forum, which was held in Campbell River on Vancouver Island in November 2011.

Youth workers are an essential support in Aboriginal communities, but they often find themselves lacking support and resources to develop and build their own skills. The Aboriginal Youth Workers Forum brought together more than 60 participants from rural First Nations communities and urban areas, Aboriginal non-profit organizations and school workers for two days of workshops on subjects as diverse as engaging youth in creative ways, writing proposals and finding and working with potential funders.

The forum also attracted a number of high-profile guest speakers, such as Priscilla Sabbas-Watts, vice-president of the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, and Chief Gordon Planes of the T'Sou-ke First Nation. One feedback form commented that *"the speakers were creative, innovative and engaging,"* a sentiment that was echoed by many who attended.

The forum was free to participants. The B.C. government, through the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, provided $16,000 to develop and stage the forum, while the federal government contributed $10,000 in funding to support travel and accommodation costs.

One of the main activities of the forum was to help the youth workers work collaboratively in regional teams. In one workshop, they were asked to create a micro-proposal that would have a positive impact on the youth in their area. But this was more than just an exercise, the participants discovered that some of the forum's supporting organizations had contributed $1,500 per group toward making their proposals a reality.

In addition to the workshops and guest speakers, the forum provided an opportunity to network and connect with other youth workers. One delegate commented, *"I appreciate the energy from all the youth workers. I made valuable personal and business contacts that will enable me to advance my own position and the work that my organization does."* The feedback from the participants was that the information sharing and working in teams provided a real "light bulb" moment for them, because they hadn't thought about working with their neighbours or considered that colleagues just a few kilometres away might be facing similar challenges.

As a result of the forum, youth are now connected to a larger network of support and are looking at the possibility of using social networking and creating regional project teams.

All the youth workers agreed that the forum had given them a positive opportunity for real skills building but that it was over too quickly. It's hoped that it might be possible to support similar forums across the province in the future.

Sharing our Successes & Identifying our Strengths
Who or what has contributed to your project's success?
What do you hope to achieve together?

Graphic recording from the Aboriginal Youth Workers Forum by Colleen Stevenson, graphic recorder.

B.C. First Nations Youth Find Their Own Voice and Their Own Beat

How do you build a community where youth can explore their potential, increase their skills and find their own voice? It's a question facing many First Nations across Canada. For the Ehattesaht First Nation, the answer came in the form of creative technologies, a strong partnership with Royal Roads University and Dawn Lindsay-Burns, a passionate youth engagement specialist from B.C's Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation.

When Dawn began working with the Ehattesaht youth, her first goal was to help them uncover and articulate aspirations for their future. She found that one of their main desires was to have an active voice in the community, but they felt that they had no way to express themselves and no capacity to do so.

Once she had identified the challenge, Dawn guided the youth through a funding application process that brought them three annual $2,500 grants from B.C.'s New Relationship Trust. The youth held workshops and associated activities, leading to a successful presentation to Chief and Council to demonstrate why their community should invest in its youth. That investment allowed the youth to purchase a computer, digital camera, speakers and microphones. Young people benefited from training and support from university and music specialist partners. Using these modern media, they created a short film that allowed them to play out scenarios of isolation, peer pressure and acceptance. They also learned how to use the technology to express their feelings and aspirations by laying down hip hop tracks and making videos.

For the Ehattesaht youth, the project has been transformative, teaching new skills and promoting teamwork and leadership. It has given them a sense of identity and self confidence in their own abilities and a unique perspective on the world. It also has given them the voice they sought within their community. They have used that new-found voice to communicate with Chief and Council, demonstrating what they could contribute to the community and asking for a similar investment in return.

Damien Hansen from Ehattesaht First Nation and Erick Michael and Darien Baker from Nuchatlaht First Nation were nominated at the 2012 E-Spirit Awards.

The Ehattesaht youth recognize that not everyone is in tune with the new media and their hip hop beat, but they are slowly bridging the gap between the new and the traditional.

"Being involved with these creative technologies has helped the youth with their leadership development work," says Dawn. "We all realize that we are only a few stages along the road and that this kind of capacity building takes time. But as the youth become more confident and the wider community joins them in their exploration of the possibilities of these creative technologies, they will continue through more stages, such as investigating how this new medium can preserve their language and culture in the digital world."

In May 2012, Damien Hansen from Ehattesaht First Nation and Erick Michael and Darien Baker from Nuchatlaht First Nation travelled to Winnipeg to attend the *E-Spirit awards*. Representing ErickMichael Productions, the boys were nominated for a young Aboriginal entrepreneur's award and grant for their work with music production. Their success gives us a clear lesson; if you give Aboriginal youth the chance and the right tools, they will create their own opportunities.

Landmark Agreement Balances Jobs and Land Protection

The confluence of the Sloko and Nakina Rivers at the heart of Taku Territory – two rivers with different headwaters coming together to flow as one, provided a Taku River Tlingit community elder with the inspiration for the names of the Wóoshtin wudidaa (Flowing Together) / Atlin Taku Land Use Plan, and the Wóoshtin yan too.aat (Walking Together) Government-to-Government (G2G) agreement. Signed in the summer of 2011, this agreement is the first of its kind in British Columbia and provides a foundation for a respectful relationship between the province and the Taku River Tlingit First Nation (TRTFN).

The agreement provides investment certainty for more than three million hectares and resolves long-standing access, protection and mineral development issues. It also creates 13 new protected areas, including areas of significant Aboriginal and community interest and great conservation value and, at the same time, establishes the processes that will support collaboration between the Taku River Tlingit and the B.C. government in the future.

At the time the agreement was signed, Taku River Tlingit spokesperson John Ward said, "The Taku River Tlingit have looked forward to this day for a very long time. I wish to congratulate and thank the members of my First Nation for their hard work and dedication in bringing our 'Tlatsini Vision' to live in government-to-government agreements, which will protect our lands and Tlingit Khustiyxh, our way of life, and help make our dreams of a prosperous and sustainable future a reality."

The confluence of the Sloko and Nakina Rivers at the heart of Taku Territory provides the inspiration for the names of the Wóoshtin wudidaa (Flowing Together) / Atlin Taku Land Use Plan, and the Wóoshtin yan too.aat (Walking Together) Government-to-Government (G2G) agreement.

The agreement is already making a difference for both the TRT and for industry to help solve on-the-ground operational issues. Significant progress has been made in working collaboratively with the TRTFN in developing best management practices for placer mining and in advancing the authorizations to develop the Tulsequah Chief Project.

Covering an area roughly the size of Vancouver Island, the Land Use Plan area is recognized internationally as home to salmon, grizzly bear and caribou and is rich in culture, biodiversity and boreal forest. Asa Berg, who acted as a liaison with the community of Atlin as a Joint Land Forum representative, says, "The Land Use Plan will allow for the diversity of Atlin to continue in a balanced way that will support both economic growth, and protect the natural beauty to ensure that our children and families can continue to thrive in this remote northern community."

Treaties

Treaties are a formal expression of reconciliation and a positive tool for building capacity and stimulating community economies. These negotiated agreements clearly define rights and responsibilities of First Nations and the federal and provincial governments, including land ownership, governance, wildlife and environmental management, financial benefits and taxation.

In 2011-12, three milestones were reached with First Nations in the treaty process:

The Tla'amin Final Agreement

- Initialled by the Tla'amin Nation, Canada and the province on Oct. 21, 2011.
- Provides certainty with respect to Tla'amin Nation's treaty rights and title throughout its traditional territory. It will also provide opportunities for the First Nation to increase its participation in regional government.
- Land component will consist of approximately 8,322 hectares of treaty lands that include surface and sub-surface resources, and is comprised of 1,917 hectares of former Indian Reserves and 6,405 hectares of former provincial Crown lands.
- The Tla'amin members voted yes to ratification of the final agreement. Next steps include ratification of the Tla'amin Final Agreement by the provincial legislature and the Parliament of Canada.

Yale First Nation Final Agreement

- ***Yale First Nation Final Agreement Act*** was passed on June 2, 2011.
- Yale First Nation ratified the Final Agreement on March 12, 2011.
- Yale approved its constitution on Nov. 20, 2010.
- Will provide a capital transfer of $10.7 million and economic development funding of $2.2 million.
- Provides approximately 1,966 hectares of provincial Crown land and former Indian Reserve lands to be owned in fee simple. This includes ownership of sub-surface resources on or under Yale First Nation land.
- Provides ownership of all forest resources on Yale First Nation land. As a treaty First Nation, the Yale government may make laws respecting forest resources and practices on their land.
- The next step in the ratification process is for Canada to introduce federal legislation. Once the Final Agreement receives royal assent, an effective date will be set by the parties at which time the Final Agreement will become a treaty.

K'ómoks First Nation Agreement-in-Principle (AIP)

- The K'ómoks First Nation Agreement-in-Principle (AIP) was signed March 24, 2012
- The AIP is a milestone for the K'omoks First Nation and provides a framework that eventually will be developed into a Final Agreement.

There are six stages in the ***BC Treaty Commission*** process.

- *Stage 1 – Statement of intent to negotiate.*
- *Stage 2 – Readiness to negotiate.*
- *Stage 3 – Negotiation of a framework agreement.*
- *Stage 4 – Negotiation of an Agreement in Principle.*
- *Stage 5 – Negotiation to finalize a treaty.*

  (At this stage, a Final Agreement is being finalized and will turn into a treaty after being signed and formally ratified by the First Nation, Canada, and B.C.).
- *Stage 6 – Implementation of the treaty. Starts on the effective date.*

With a Congregation of Eagles Overhead

With a congregation of eagles overhead and the snow-capped mountains in sharp relief just outside, stretching as far as the eye could see, it's difficult to imagine how the K'ómoks First Nation Agreement-in-Principle (AIP) signing could have been a more affirming occasion.

On March 24, the K'ómoks gymnasium in Courtenay was filled to capacity to witness the AIP signing by federal Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan and Mary Polak, B.C.'s minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, at the time. K'ómoks First Nation Counc. Barbara Mitchell witnessed the document signed earlier by K'ómoks First Nation Chief Ernie Hardy.

Mary Polak, former Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation and K'ómoks First Nation Chief Ernie Hardy celebrate the signing of the K'ómoks First Nation Agreement-in-Principle on March 24, 2012.

It was at the end of a long working day for most K'ómoks members, who had been there since early morning, going through a treaty review and update. By 3:30, when the signing ceremony was slated to begin, it was a balmy 13 degrees and people were anxious to taste just a little of the early spring sunshine, so it was even more telling that people stayed put for the signing.

Some special guests also made the journey to witness what was a significant step toward a final treaty for the K'ómoks people. Among them were Tsawwassen First Nation Chief Kim Baird and BC AFN Regional Chief Jody Wilson-Raybould, who commented she came from just down the street on Cape Mudge. Canada's Armed Forces were represented and so were some of K'ómoks' neighbours on Vancouver Island. As well, leaders from several other First Nations across the province also were present to witness the occasion.

During the hour-long ceremony, there were a number of standing ovations and some watery eyes, as people allowed the full meaning of what they were experiencing to wash over them. It wasn't just the K'ómoks members who were emotional. Most of the people in the room understood that to get to that point took not just five years – the time they have been in treaty negotiations – but more than 100 years, from the time of first European contact.

K'ómoks has shown itself to be entrepreneurial in spirit, having already successfully launched a number of business enterprises, including the very successful Pentlatch Seafood Inc., which distributes seafood worldwide. The land and funding it would receive upon completion of a treaty would assist the First Nation in achieving further success for its members and for all British Columbians, because when a First Nation is successful, we are all better off.

With the celebration of this milestone complete, the hard work continues for all three Parties: Canada, B.C. and K'ómoks First Nation. A Final Agreement and treaty are still years away, but now there is a firm, commonly-agreed-to understanding of the scaffolding upon which will be built a self-governing First Nation. Success is now in K'ómoks' sights and memories of this noteworthy occasion will, one hopes, help to sustain them in the years to come.

Province Ratifies Yale First Nation Final Agreement

In the Rotunda of the B.C. legislature, Yale First Nation Chief Robert Hope and youth from the Yale First Nation placed drawings and handwritten stories into a time capsule to celebrate the introduction of provincial legislation to ratify B.C.'s third modern treaty under the B.C. treaty process. The "Yale First Nation Final Agreement Act" was introduced in the B.C. legislature on May 18, 2011, and passed on June 2, 2011.

Chief Hope has described treaties as having the potential to be the 'single largest catalyst for economic development, partnership and improved governance' in B.C. The Yale First Nation Final Agreement is an extraordinary instrument for the Yale people to create a better future for their families as a self-governing community, but all British Columbians benefit when individual communities are strong and local economies thrive – that's what a treaty does and what the Yale treaty will do.

Yale is the seventh First Nation under the B.C. treaty process to witness the introduction of its treaty legislation in the B.C. Legislature. The people of the Yale First Nation have worked tirelessly over the past 17 years to realize a treaty for their families.

Chief Hope spoke at an event in the legislature prior to the introduction of the bill, saying the treaty brings unprecedented economic and social opportunities to the nation as the foundation upon which the Yale people will build their own government and exercise jurisdiction over their own lands. He added that his greatest wish is for a 'treaty-future' for the children of Yale First Nation.

Yale is a small – about 150 members – First Nation near Hope, located deep in the beautiful Fraser Canyon. The members of Yale First Nation are determined to realize their vision to make life better for all members.

The Final Agreement clearly defines Yale First Nation's ownership and management of mineral, forestry and other resources on treaty settlement lands, and defines Yale's rights related to fishing, gathering and harvesting.

The story of the Yale people is a tribute to the resilience and adaptability of a people who would not allow the future to leave them behind; but who instead sought reconciliation of their rights, title, and way of life from the Province of British Columbia and the nation of Canada.

In addition to the Yale First Nation Final Agreement, since 2002 the B.C. government has signed treaties with seven other First Nations, including, most recently, the Tla'amin Nation, the Tsawwassen First Nation and the five Maa-nulth First Nations. The province continues to make steady progress toward final agreements with other First Nations.

Flags flying to celebrate the introduction of provincial legislation to ratify the Yale First Nations Final Agreement.

Education

Access to a culturally based education and learning environment is an important element in fostering learner success at all ages. Working with dedicated partners and communities across the province, meaningful steps are being taken. School curricula and resources continue to be developed that reflect and honour the diverse cultures and histories of Aboriginal Peoples in the province. Post-secondary institutions continue to create welcoming spaces and services for Aboriginal students. As well, more Aboriginal adults and youth are accessing training and employment supports and completing employment training programs.

Through these and many other initiatives, work to improve the educational outcomes of Aboriginal learners will remain a priority.

2011-12 Highlights

Early Childhood

- Provided $5 million to fund proposals focused on community delivery of effective, quality and culturally appropriate Aboriginal early childhood development services. The ***First Nations and Urban Aboriginal Early Childhood Development Steering Committee*** provides stewardship over funding. The $5 million supports the Year 2 implementation of the First Nations Early Childhood Development Framework and the Aboriginal Early Years Advisory Circle Strategic Plan. This funding was in addition to the 2011-12 ongoing regional funding provided to support 43 Aboriginal ECD community-based programs both on and off reserve across B.C.
- The province funded the Dollywood Imagination Library program which delivered free books monthly to 356 First Nation and Metis children from birth to ages 5 primarily in rural and remote areas.
- A ***StrongStart BC*** Outreach program was opened in the ***Nisga'a School District*** with $20,000 in start-up funding provided by the Ministry of Education. The program runs out of four schools and serves four aboriginal communities; Gingolx, Laxalts'ap, Gitwinksilkw, New Aiyansh.

Kindergarten to Grade 12

- Supported school districts and Aboriginal communities as they created, signed and implemented additional Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements around the province for a total of 53 out of 60 school districts. Four school districts have signed their third agreement, signifying 11 years of working together to increase the success of Aboriginal students.
- Supported the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) in the planning phases and development of the Kindergarten to Grade 3 teacher resource guide *In Your Own Words* on inclusion of authentic First Nations content in the classroom.
- Provided support to various First Nations communities and associated school districts in the planning and development phases of their First Nations language curriculum. There are now 15 First Nations language curriculum documents approved for use to meet the language learning requirements for students in the public/independent school system.
- Initiated a consultation and advisory process to develop a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges associated with developing an Aboriginal language curriculum using the Language Template for Ministry-Approved language curriculum documents.

- Engaged in discussions with Boards of Education and FNESC to ensure that changes to the education system made by the implementation of Personalized Learning contribute to Aboriginal student success. Personalized Learning will tailor the public education system to the unique needs and interests of every child.

Post-Secondary

- 117 Aboriginal students received a ***BC Aboriginal Student Award***. In total, more than $311,000 in awards was distributed ranging from $1,000 to $3,500 per award.
- A $2-million ***Teacher Education Award*** was established to provide financial support to Aboriginal students enrolled in teacher education programs, including First Nations language teacher education programs.
- Continued with the implementation of Aboriginal Service Plans in 11 public post-secondary institutions supporting recruitment, retention and success for Aboriginal learners in B.C.
- Refreshed the ***Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training website*** and launched a Facebook Page (Aboriginal Ed BC) to engage directly with Aboriginal students and community members.
- Worked with the First Nations Education Steering Committee, the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association, the Métis Nation BC, the First Nations Public Service, BC Colleges, BC Association of Universities and Institutes and the Research Universities' Council of British Columbia to draft a new Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and Action Plan. Engagement on the draft framework included in-person meetings, Twitter and Facebook, and culminated in a one-day forum held in February 2012.

Employment, Job Training and Apprenticeship

- More than 8,600 Aboriginal people received training and employment supports offered through more than 20 programs funded by the ***BC-Canada Labour Market Agreement*** (LMA). Examples include:
  - *More than $3 million invested to increase trades training opportunities for Aboriginal people through the* ***Industry Training Authority's*** *(ITA) Aboriginal in Trades Training Initiative. Approximately 680 Aboriginal people received training through these projects.*
  - *Approximately 1,100 youth in 36 communities were served through* ***BladeRunners****, a program that offers training, life skills and employment opportunities for at-risk youth, (over 60 per cent are self-identified Aboriginal people). BladeRunners has a 75 per cent job placement rate and provides its participants with access to job coaches at all hours, every day of the week.*
- BladeRunners also launched a Fast Track pilot, providing additional training to help secure employment for 10 select clients in more skilled positions in the mining, information technology and culinary arts sectors.
- More than 6,700 Aboriginal people received training and employment supports offered through the programming funded by the Canada-BC Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA).
- The ITA implemented the remaining action items identified in the 2009 Aboriginal Strategic Business Plan. Through collaboration with Aboriginal support agencies, employers, training providers, and program participants, the number of Aboriginal people in apprenticeship programs has grown 103 per cent between 2006 and 2011.

- The ITA commissioned a ***research project*** to build upon the 2008 *Aboriginal Trades and Apprenticeship* research report and the 2009 *Aboriginal Initiatives Strategic Business Plan*. This latest research focused on identifying barriers, challenges and best practices for recruitment, completion and retention to both prepare and employ Aboriginal apprentices for a career in the skilled trades.
- Continued with the ***Aboriginal Training for Employment Programs***, which directly connects Aboriginal people to sustainable employment opportunities through job-related training and support services (e.g. workplace supports, mentoring/coaching, retention tools, etc.) by renewing 11 contracts and issuing a Request for Proposals for additional service providers.

Family and Adult Literacy

- The provincial and federal governments co-funded the Embedding Literacy and Essential Skills in the Workplace research project which pairs ***Decoda Literacy Solutions*** with the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres to develop strategies that empower friendship centre staff to boost the literacy levels of the people they serve. A how-to embed literacy guidebook is under development and will be launched in late June.
- 18 Aboriginal literacy programs around the province received funding totalling more than $479,000 through the province's Community Adult Literacy Program (CALP). The programs are delivered through partnerships between Aboriginal community groups and B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions, and help adult learners improve their literacy and numeracy skills.

The Strategy for the Future

- The Ministry of Education has reviewed, and will continue to review, the impact of Education Enhancement Agreements as a system to support Aboriginal learner success, and will network with other regions to share successful strategies. The ministry will continue to work with FNESC for the full implementation of First Nations education jurisdiction and, through consultation with Aboriginal communities, will work to increase the Aboriginal voice in all aspects of the K-12 school system.
- A new ***Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and Action Plan*** was launched on National Aboriginal Day, June 21, 2012. The policy framework and action plan to benefit Aboriginal learners was developed in partnership with Aboriginal post-secondary partners. Its goal is to enhance participation by Aboriginal Peoples in the social, cultural and economic life of their communities, the province and global society. As part of its commitment, the provincial government is investing a total of $16.2 million in 2012-2013 for programs and financial assistance to help Aboriginal students succeed at their post-secondary studies.
- In 2012/13, the Industry Training Authority, in partnership with the Aboriginal Advisory Committee, will build upon the lessons learned from a three-year program review to identify strategic directions and suggested strategies for the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal tradespeople in B.C.
- Approximately 1,200 youth are expected to receive training through the BladeRunners program in 2012/13.

Reawakening Our Entrepreneurial Spirit
Aboriginal Self-Employment Program

Tseil-Waututh Nation and Turtle Island Indigenous Education:

"If someone believes they can do it, then they can do it." This is what Aboriginal Training for Employment Program participants have demonstrated to Riva Nelson, contract manager for the Tsleil-Waututh Nation, about achieving their dreams. In partnership with the Tsleil-Waututh Nation, Turtle Island Indigenous Education offers the Reawakening Our Entrepreneurial Spirit Aboriginal Self-Employment Program, delivered on Tsleil-Waututh territory in North Vancouver and at Simon Fraser University. First, participants spend 12 weeks studying Aboriginal economic histories, business and market research, business plan writing, and relating Aboriginal cultural values to successful business practices, among other topics. Then, students spend six months in employment, gaining valuable work experience while initiating their businesses. One participant took a unique path into the program, but her results are not at all uncommon for Turtle Island's program.

This is her story: one of her sons decided to withdraw from high school. As a caring mother, she encouraged her son to continue his education—she was concerned for his future. Her son argued that he did not need a high school diploma because she herself had not completed high school and her life had turned out satisfactorily. She, however, disagreed. At the time, she was a single mother relying on income assistance as a means of providing for her family. For the sake of her sons, she took a huge step forward in her life and returned to high school in her mid-thirties. In her nation, she attended adult education classes. It was while she was completing these classes that she shared the same classroom in which Turtle Island was hosting its program. As she worked on her homework, she listened to the class discussions. She became more and more involved in the class answering the instructors' questions and even helping other students. Impressed, Turtle Island instructors mentioned to her that she could consider enrolling in their program. She has now graduated from the program, works full time, also has started her own arts company. Since deciding to continue her education, she has served not only as an inspiration for her sons, but for her entire community.

Aboriginal Youth Internship Program completion ceremony. BACK ROW: Della Preston (Y4 Intern); Meghan Shannon (Y4 Intern); Alana Sayers (Y4 Intern); former Minister Mary Polak; Chief Douglas White III (First Nations Summit); John Kervel (Y4 Intern); Rachelle Clifford (Y4 Intern); Jason Alsop (Y4 Intern); Tessa Lang (Y4 Intern); Nakoa Faulconer (Y4 Intern); Tarah Samuels (Y4 Intern); and Sasha Hobbs (AYIP Program Lead). FRONT ROW: Allison James (Y4 Intern); Grand Chief Stewart Phillip (Union of BC Indian Chiefs); Angelina Brock (Y4 Intern); Dallis Warren (Y4 Intern); and Allison Beardsworth (AYIP Program Coordinator).

Aboriginal Youth Interns are the Leaders of Today

Since 2007, B.C. has been providing Aboriginal youth with the opportunity of 12 months of paid, practical, inside experience on how the provincial government works through the Aboriginal Youth Internship Program.

Aboriginal youth is the fastest-growing demographic in the province and play a vital role in ensuring the BC Public Service and Aboriginal organizations have a great pool of talent to draw on in the future. The internship provides invaluable work experience and leadership development for Aboriginal youth ages 19 to 29. Interns spend nine months within a ministry and three months working for an Aboriginal organization, offering them as wide an experience as possible to help them decide what direction they want to take with their careers.

Program lead Stephanie Papik, who won a 'Business of the Year' award at the 2011 B.C. Aboriginal Business Awards, is excited about what the internship program offers. "It provides opportunities for Aboriginal youth, leaders of today, to work with provincial and First Nations leadership," she said. "It provides them with the opportunities to develop skills and networks to successfully pursue their own dreams."

This year, Stephanie introduced an innovative use of videos into the mix to encourage the interns to think more deeply about themselves. The videos explore who the interns are, who they identify with, what virtues they value and how to use concepts, such as service, unity, and flexibility in their daily lives. The interns also will contribute to a 'Message in a Bottle' video to pass on their feelings and thoughts on the program to next year's interns.

The program won the Premier's Award for Excellence and Innovation in the Partnership category for its 2010 program. This recognition is an indication of how successful the internships have been since they started. In October 2011, the Year 4 cohort set of interns celebrated the completion of their year while Year 5 started on their own adventure.

Here is what just a few of the past interns had to say about their experience.

Sarah Robinson was part of the 2008-2009 program and is now working for the BC Treaty Commission. *"The program was an amazing experience that changed the course of my life. There were some major challenges to overcome, such as being away from family for a long period of time, but the effort was well worth the confidence and skills that the program gave me, as well as the connections and networking opportunities."*

Nakoa Faulconer, who interned with the Ministry of Attorney General in the 2010-2011 program said, *"This program is an unbelievable opportunity that can take you to a whole new level in your personal and professional life. It is an excellent way to position yourself in a leadership role to pursue your goals personally, and for your Aboriginal community."*

Alishia Boulette, who interned with the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, also in the 2010-2011 program, had this to say: *"I never thought I'd be here. Now I couldn't imagine my life any other way. We are not only interns; we are important, supported and valued."*

Housing and Infrastructure

The province, the ***Aboriginal Housing Management Association*** (AHMA), and other Aboriginal housing service providers and partners are working together to develop appropriate housing to meet the diverse needs of Aboriginal people and families living off-reserve.

The Provincial Housing Strategy, ***Housing Matters BC***, includes a strategic direction to address Aboriginal housing needs. Under this strategy, the Province has developed housing programs for Aboriginal people to meet immediate and long-term housing needs. This includes the management and delivery of affordable, quality housing to urban and rural Aboriginal people by AHMA as the provincial and federal governments transfer authority for social housing to their administration. Opportunities are also being created to link trades training for Aboriginal people with new construction of subsidized housing.

2011-12 Highlights

- More than 1,500 homeless Aboriginal people were provided with housing and supports through the ***Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program***, the Homeless Outreach Program, and the Emergency Shelter Program.
- Approximately 120 units of supportive housing were completed under the ***Provincial Homelessness Initiative***, which benefits many homeless Aboriginal people.
- B.C. is the first province to transfer management of Aboriginal social housing to the Aboriginal community. The province has transferred more than 1,000 Aboriginal housing units to the AHMA.
- The Rural Native Housing Program, a federal government program established in 1974 and transferred to BC Housing in 2006, includes more than 500 houses scattered in small communities around the province. In March 2012, BC Housing transferred the ownership of 75 homes located on Vancouver Island to ***M'Akola Housing Society***, an Aboriginal housing provider. This is the first step in a phased-in approach for the transfer of ownership of the entire rural native housing stock to Aboriginal housing providers.
- Through the ***Aboriginal Housing Initiative*** (AHI) approximately 30 units of transitional housing with culturally-appropriate support services have been created.
- The Pathways to Technology project continued to gather momentum in Fiscal 2011-2012 as connectivity expanded to more First Nations throughout the province. As of March 31, 2012, 170 of 203 First Nations had access to broadband backhaul or transport services.

The Strategy for the Future

Through BC Housing, the province will continue to transfer off-reserve Aboriginal housing units to the Aboriginal Housing Management Association and address Aboriginal housing need through the Aboriginal Housing Initiative and the Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program. The province will continue to work with the First Nations Leadership Council and the Government of Canada on the ***First Nations Housing Memorandum of Understanding*** to explore innovative approaches to improve housing for Aboriginal people in B.C. Through a process of collaboration with First Nations organizations, the federal government, broader public sector organizations and the private sector, the province will continue working toward ensuring that all 203 First Nations have affordable broadband access.

Skills Training Opportunity Improves First Nations Housing and Infrastructure

Improving housing conditions for First Nations communities is key to improving social and economic well-being. In 2008, B.C. signed the Tripartite First Nations Housing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the First Nations Leadership Council.

The Technical Committee responsible for implementing the MOU agreed to support several individual community-based projects to illustrate the feasibility and benefits of connecting existing provincial training and employment programs with federal on-reserve housing programs. A demonstration community-based housing project was launched in 2010, where a number of initiatives were developed jointly with the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nations community, located near the north end of Vancouver Island. Under the leadership of the community, the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation ran a BladeRunners construction training and employment program for 12 local youth who received more than seven weeks of basic construction, workplace safety, life skills, and job coaching. Four young people were employed after the program was completed.

The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation provided one-time funding to help the community complete its skills and employment inventory. Les Taylor, band manager, and Jessie Hemphill, Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nations communications officer, were instrumental in compiling the inventory resulting in 100 per cent of local employable members surveyed. Four community members were hired and received training to conduct the surveys; *"I have benefitted in this job many ways. I've gained a lot of people skills and a lot of knowledge from what our community wants and (I've) been keeping my own record while learning (Lucy Scow, Surveyor)."*

Lorna Henderson, housing co-ordinator, helped to organize the delivery of BC Housing's SkillsPlus electrical and plumbing modules for a group of community members. Brandon Walkus took both modules and found them very informative. *"I have a stove right now that has two burners out and I now know how to fix them,"* he said. *"A lot of times people's stove won't work around here and they'll just get a new one. And it could be a $25 fix."*

In this skills training opportunity, Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nations received construction skills and work experience, as well as practical home maintenance training. Community-based housing projects such as this one, developed through the First Nations Housing MOU, are a great example of how we can work together to help strengthen communities.

Trainer Jim Sawyer points out some electricial wiring to members of the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nations.

Health

The province, working with the *interim* First Nations Health Authority, the federal government and regional health authorities, remains committed to making progress on the health actions in the Tripartite First Nations Health Plan and improving the health status of First Nations and Aboriginal Peoples in the province. The five-year mark has recently passed since the signing of the Tripartite First Nations Health Plan, between the First Nations Leadership Council and the governments of British Columbia and Canada. That 10-year agreement is focused on the areas of governance and health actions, which have a combined total of 39+ action items to fulfill. Approximately one-third of the action items are complete and two-thirds are in progress.

2011-12 Highlights

Governance

- The ***British Columbia Tripartite Framework Agreement on First Nation Health Governance*** was signed on October 2011 by the province, First Nations Health Society and the Government of Canada. The Framework Agreement is the first of its kind in the country. It sets out the commitment for the transfer of the planning, designing, management and delivery of First Nations federal health programs currently under Health Canada First Nations and Inuit Health Branch to the First Nations Health Authority. The transfer date of programs and services to the First Nations Health Authority is targeted for April 1, 2013.
- Dr. Evan Adams was appointed to the position of ***deputy provincial health officer***, in which he will work with the interim First Nations Health Authority to improve the quality of data collected and health indicators related to First Nations health. Dr. Adams' new role reflects a strengthening of the partnership between the province and First Nations in B.C.
- Regional Partnership Accords have been signed between ***Vancouver Island Health Authority***, ***Vancouver Coastal Health Authority***, ***Northern Health Authority*** and ***Fraser Health Authority*** and each of their respective regional caucuses of the First Nations Health Council. In the case of the Interior region, seven government-to-government agreements with the seven Nations of the Interior region are expected and one umbrella agreement. Interior Health Authority currently has signed agreements with the Okanagan Nation Alliance and the Ktunaxa Nation. The regional agreements will assist in achieving a more integrated health-care system, reflecting the culture and perspective of B.C. First Nations.

Research, Data and Information Sharing

- The newly created ***First Nations Client File*** (FNCF) is the best method of access to accurate health information for the identifiable majority of First Nations residing in B.C. The FNCF is co-managed by the Tripartite Data and Information Planning Committee consisting of members from Health Canada, B.C. Ministry of Health and the *interim* First Nations Health Authority. They balance the need for high-quality First Nations health data with the need to protect privacy and the principle of First Nations health information governance.
- An ***Information Sharing Agreement*** was signed by Métis Nation BC and the B.C. Ministry of Health to enable data sharing as part of the ***Métis Public Health Surveillance Program***. The program will enable the creation of a Métis cohort file (a first of its kind in B.C.) through data linkages with Ministry of Health administrative databases in order to be able to report on the health outcomes of Métis in B.C., specifically the prevalence of chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness and diabetes.

Service and Program Delivery

- The province provided $320,000 to fund the Provincial Office of ***Aboriginal Infant Development Program*** and ***Aboriginal Supported Childhood Development***. These two provincial positions provide support to a total of 94 programs across the province, located both on- and off-reserve, which provide direct services to Aboriginal children who are at risk or have been diagnosed with a developmental delay and require additional supports.
- By the end of 2011, nearly 7,000 health staff from across all health authorities and the province participated in the ***Indigenous Cultural Competency Training Program*** developed by the Provincial Health Services Agency.
- Ministry of Health sponsored a minor grant funding program and activities designed to build capacity within Aboriginal communities to promote healthy living. Sixty ***Healthy Living Projects*** and 75 ***Aboriginal RunWalk*** programs were supported by 135 grants of up to $1,000 each, delivered in partnership with the ***Aboriginal Sports, Recreation and Physical Activity Partners Council*** and ***SportMedBC***.
- The Ministry of Health, the five regional health authorities, and Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Health Branch conducted an environmental scan of oral health services available both on- and off-reserve for First Nations and Aboriginal children in B.C. from birth to seven years of age. The report will be used to support the development of a First Nations and Aboriginal child oral health strategy.
- The province committed $48 million to the ***Seek and Treat to Optimally Prevent HIV/ AIDS (STOP HIV/AIDS) Pilot Project***. STOP HIV/AIDS is a four-year initiative (2010-2013) being conducted in the City of Vancouver, as well as in Prince George, to improve access to care and treatment for all eligible HIV-positive individuals living in B.C. In April 2011, the BC First Nations/ Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Review Committee was established to provide a First Nations and Aboriginal HIV / AIDS lens to the working groups under the STOP HIV/AIDS Leadership Committee.
- The Ministry of Health worked with the *interim* First Nations Health Authority, and Health Canada to implement a program to train Aboriginal doulas to assist with birthing. Aboriginal Doula liaison positions have been developed in the Interior and Vancouver Island health authorities to support trained doulas, facilitate networking and assist in integration of doulas into the continuum of perinatal care service delivery. A DVD about the program is in production to help bring awareness to different stakeholders and additional curriculum is under development.

The Strategy for the Future

- With the BC Tripartite Framework Agreement on First Nation Health Governance signed, the focus is now on the implementation of the agreement in preparation for April 1, 2013, when all of the programs and services of First Nations and Inuit Health are targeted for transfer to the First Nations Health Authority. Part of the implementation phase includes the conclusion of many sub-agreements on issues such as HR, Health Benefits and Accommodations. The Ministry of Health will work with the *interim* First Nations Health Authority, Aboriginal organizations, and Health Canada to develop a "First Nations and Aboriginal Mental Wellness and Substance Use Ten-Year Plan." This plan will address a wide range of issues including holistic wellness; community-based and culturally-appropriate responses; and prevention, treatment and intervention for substance abuse and mental-health problems.

Landmark Accord is a Positive Step Forward in the Fraser Region

"Blending the best of two worlds of health – modern medicine and ancestral teachings and ways," that's the vision of the landmark Partnership Accord signed between the Fraser Salish Nations and the Fraser Health Authority in December 2011.

It's the first health agreement of its kind in British Columbia and allows for more shared decision-making between the health authority and one of the regional caucuses formed by the First Nations Health Society. This means greater participation in decisions about health services in the Fraser region.

There are more than 36,000 Aboriginal people living in the region and this groundbreaking accord aims to take account of their diverse visions of health care in their communities and recognizes that some choose traditional health care methods rather than mainstream methods, and some want a mix of both.

Chief Willie Charlie, representative for the independent Fraser Salish communities, sums it up when he says that "our approach to health and well-being is more than anything, community based. First Nations and Aboriginal people have a good understanding of their health-care challenges and goals, and this partnership with Fraser Health will help us reach these goals sooner."

Working together is an important part of the accord and one of the key commitments is the creation of an Aboriginal Health Steering Committee, which will oversee the implementation of the accord and be a forum for partnership and collaboration on health priorities, policies, budgets, programs and services in the region.

The accord was created in a spirit of partnership and a commitment to the well-being of all Aboriginal people living in the Fraser region and it signals another positive step forward in our drive to build healthy Aboriginal communities throughout B.C.

L to R: Chief Willie Charlie; Chief Maureen Chapman; Fraser Health President and CEO Dr. Nigel Murray; and Grand Chief Doug Kelly shake hands after the signing.

Economic Opportunities

Through the ***Canada Starts Here: the BC Jobs Plan***, the province is focusing on three key activities that build on natural and earned strengths of the B.C. economy, as well as the province's skilled workforce and fiscal discipline.

- Working with employers and communities to enable job creation across the province.
- Strengthening our infrastructure to get our goods to market.
- Expanding markets for B.C. products and services, particularly in Asia.

The province works with First Nations, Métis, Aboriginal organizations and communities to create economic opportunities that are sustainable and will improve the standard of living, well-being of Aboriginal people and provide certainty for investment. Partnerships and relationships are established that help attract investment, share resource revenues, establish inclusive land decision-making processes, help to develop a skilled labour force, and foster equitable access to income supports and services.

2011-12 Highlights

Business and Development

- As part of the Canada Starts Here: the BC Jobs Plan, the 13-member Aboriginal Business and Investment Council was appointed to work closely with the BC Jobs and Investment Board to identify business and investment opportunities.
- Twelve new clean energy technology projects were announced under the ***Innovative Clean Energy (ICE) Fund***. Three First Nation projects include T'Souke Sustainable Community Greenhouse and Tsay Keh Dene Williston Lake Biomass Energy System receiving $1 million each, and Tsay Keh Dene Solar Airfield Project receiving $81,000.
- The ***First Nation Clean Energy Business Fund*** provided $1.36 M to 20 First Nations to pursue their alternative energy plans and to bring real economic and social benefits to their communities. Funding has been provided to support First Nations ranging in job training, joint ventures with industry, feasibility studies, the development of business plans and community energy planning.
- The province honoured 18 businesses at the second ***B.C. Aboriginal Business Awards*** gala event. The awards honour and celebrate business excellence and represent the growing number of outstanding Aboriginal business leaders in the province.
- Delivered the ***Aboriginal Business and Entrepreneurship Skills Training*** (BEST) program in 11 communities. The BEST program provides Aboriginal people with entrepreneurial skills training to undertake market research, create a business plan, and start their own businesses.

Agreements

- The Huu-ay-aht First Nation signed the first-ever First Nations' Woodland Licence with the Province of British Columbia. The licence will allow the Huu-ay-aht First Nation to have a larger say in the management of the land consistent with the culture and values of their community.

- The direct award of forest tenure opportunities through forestry agreements has improved First Nations capacity in the forest industry sector by offering a total of 63.9 million in forest tenures since 2002. First Nations now hold more than 15.5 per cent of the allowable annual provincial harvest in competitive and direct award forest tenures.
- The province entered into 34 new ***Forest Consultation and Revenue Sharing Agreements*** (FCRSA) and as of March 31, 2012, had entered into 87 FCRSA with First Nations that provide revenue sharing from forestry activities occurring directly in their traditional territories.

Employment

- Further to the signing in 2011 of a Persons with Disabilities Protocol between the Ministry of Social Development (MSD), the ***First Nations Social Development Society*** and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, the MSD facilitated follow-up meetings on next steps, including training to band staff on a recent Human Rights decision; and an in-person training session to review the Persons with Disabilities adjudication guidelines.
- Twenty staff from First Nations Nations/Bands took part in MSD's Mental Health and Wellness Training through a partnership between the First Nations Social Development Society and the Learning Services at MSD. The training helped front-line workers identify human rights concerns associated with mental health, and to recognize, respond and refer clients who may be experiencing mental-health and/or wellness challenges.

The Strategy for the Future

Over the next year, the province anticipates:

- Offering forest consultation and revenue sharing agreements to First Nations with expired or expiring agreements.
- Continuing to direct award forestry tenures, including the new First Nations Woodland License.
- Negotiating new consultation and resource revenue-sharing agreements with First Nations, such as Strategic Engagement Agreements and Economic Community Development Agreements.
- Government's March 2012 Budget indicated a reintroduction of the Innovative Clean Energy (ICE) Fund levy on energy products, excluding electricity, to begin April 1, 2013.
- MSD has created an Expert Advisory Panel on Specialized Populations as part of program governance for the Employment Program of BC that will help review results, monitor data and ensure that clients from specialized populations are receiving the services they need. Representatives from Aboriginal groups are able to participate in program governance through this panel.
- MSD will finalize a Recruitment Strategy to increase the representation of Aboriginal people and persons with disabilities in the workforce.

Woodland Licence Working for Vancouver Island First Nation

The Huu-ay-aht First Nation is leading the way when it comes to a new type of licence designed to create forestry jobs for First Nations. In December 2011, the Huu-ay-aht signed the first-ever First Nation Woodland Licence with the Province of British Columbia. This groundbreaking agreement enables the Huu-ay-aht to harvest 70,000 cubic metres of timber per year and has put more band members to work at a variety of forest-related jobs near their treaty settlement land on Vancouver Island.

"Our cutblock planners are working, our road engineers are working, our fallers are working, our truckers are working, and our dryland sort is operating," said Huu-ay-aht director of lands and natural resources Larry Johnson.

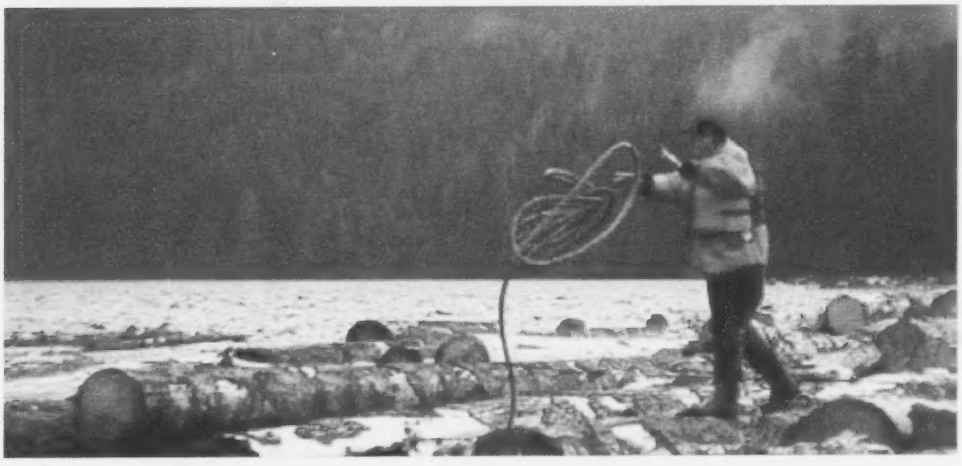
Huu-ay-aht First Nations Forestry Limited Partnership started out in 1999 as a two-person operation. It has since grown into a thriving forestry business that can support up to 60 direct and indirect jobs when running at full capacity. Many of these workers are young adults seeking skills they need to start a career in forestry.

"We have put our people back to work," said Johnson, whose brother and nephew are both employed at the Huu-ay-aht dryland sort.

Huu-ay-aht band members are also employed on a shake and shingle salvage crew. When they're not busy combing the forests for cedar between Port Alberni and Bamfield, this versatile crew works on silviculture jobs, such as spacing, brushing and weeding, and fertilization. Huu-ay-aht First Nations Forestry Limited Partnership is also looking at harvest opportunities for non-timber forest products, such as seeds and mushrooms, which are important to Huu-ay-aht values and culture. Without the Woodland Licence, it's highly likely that fewer Huu-ay-aht would be working in the woods this year and local economic activity would be significantly reduced.

"We would be a much smaller company trying to compete in a contract world," explained Johnson. "We got into the forestry business to once again be stewards of our own land and to help support other small businesses in our area."

The province plans to create similar opportunities for other First Nations around the province as part of a new forest sector strategy in support of Canada Starts Here: The BC Jobs Plan. The strategy calls for up to eight First Nations Woodland Licences to be awarded in 2012-2013.



A Huu-ay-aht forestry worker at work. The new First Nations Woodland Licence provides increased tenure security and improves Huu-ay-aht First Nation's ability to secure investment and loans.

Measuring Progress

Measuring and tracking progress on closing social and economic gaps between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal population is a responsibility shared across government. Some of the indicators and reports being used by ministries and Crown agencies for reporting are highlighted below. Many are also included in the cross-government report, ***Measuring Outcomes***.

Crown-Aboriginal Relationships

- Number of completed treaties, incremental treaty agreements and agreements-in-principle.
- Number of completed agreements that support strategic engagement with First Nations, including reconciliation agreements and strategic engagement agreements.
- Percentage of public service employees who are able to use their knowledge of Aboriginal Peoples, histories and cultures to influence their day-to-day work.
- First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council ***annual reports***.
- Ministry of Children and Family Development ***public performance measures***.
- The Native Courtworker and Counselling Association of British Columbia ***Annual Reports***.

Education

Local boards of education and Aboriginal community partners continue to work together to develop and implement Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements. These agreements help to define what evidence of success looks like and provide ways to improve educational success for Aboriginal youth.

The Ministry of Education collects data to monitor the performance of Aboriginal students in the BC public school system. The data is published annually in the form of a report entitled "***How Are We Doing?***" (HAWD) which includes demographic and assessment outcomes at both provincial and school district level. This report provides a mechanism for the Ministry of Education, Aboriginal communities and school districts to open dialogue and make recommendations for improving the educational outcomes for Aboriginal students.

Specific measures include:

- B.C. Certificate of Graduation.
- Scores on the Foundation Skills Assessment.
- Post-secondary participation credential achievement rate.
- The number of self-identified Aboriginal people registered in apprenticeship technical training at a public post-secondary institution.
- ***ReadNow BC's Final Report*** for a summary of the provincial literacy action plan (2007-2011).
- Student Transition Project Highlights.

Housing and Infrastructure

- Core housing need.
- Percentage of households reporting major repairs.
- Number of First Nations with broadband facilities.
- Number of long-term drinking water advisories on reserve.
- ***BC Housing annual reports***.

Health

- Life expectancy at birth.
- Mortality rates.
- Youth suicide rates.
- Infant mortality rates.
- Prevalence of diabetes.
- Incidence of childhood obesity.
- The number of practising certified First Nations health-care professionals.
- Other key indicators include First Nations defined wellness indicators, the measurement of new and improved health governance, management, and service delivery relationships at all levels.
- Ministry of Children and Family Development ***public performance measures***.
- Pathways to Health and Healing: *2nd Report on the Health and Well-Being of Aboriginal People in British Columbia*.

Economic Opportunities

- Unemployment rate.
- Median employment income.
- Self-employment status.
- Possession of apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma.
- Number of completed revenue-sharing agreements with First Nations.
- Number of completed agreements under the Forest Consultation and Revenue Sharing Agreement program.

Ministries also report on specific measures and indicators in their ***service plans***.

Conclusion

The *2011-12 Annual Report on Progress* highlights initiatives enabled through partnerships between the province, First Nations, Métis and Aboriginal people and organizations to improve social and economic outcomes for Aboriginal people across the province.

Work will continue to strengthen the reconciliation process through the signing of new agreements and treaties, supporting the priorities of Aboriginal people to govern and design services for their diverse communities and needs, and initiating economic development and employment strategies, among many other important actions.

Through sustained commitment, the province, First Nations, Métis and Inuit people will work together to establish healing relationships and build sustainable communities for Aboriginal people and all British Columbians.

To learn about the Province of British Columbia's New Relationship with First Nations and Aboriginal people visit ***www.newrelationship.gov.bc.ca***.

To find out more about the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation visit ***www.gov.bc.ca/arr***.

To obtain further information from specific ministries, access the main Government of British Columbia web page: ***www.gov.bc.ca*** .

Appendix 1:

Cornerstones to Progress – Accomplishments Since 2005

Crown-Aboriginal Relationships

2011: A Memorandum of Understanding between the Métis Nation BC, the Métis Commission for Children and Family of BC, and Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) was signed.

2009: The ***Recognition and Reconciliation Protocol on First Nations Children, Youth and Families*** was signed by the province, the BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit and Union of BC Indian Chiefs. It committed the parties to an inclusive process to establish a common vision for First Nations child and family wellness in British Columbia in addition to other commitments laid out in the protocol.

2009: The subsequent Nisga'a Nation Fiscal Financing Agreement (NNFFA) was finalized by the province, Canada and the Nisga'a Nation (the "Parties") on April 1, 2009. The NNFFA is a tripartite funding arrangement to enable the provision of agreed-upon public programs and services to Nisga'a citizens and, where applicable, non- Nisga'a occupants of Nisga'a Lands. This renewed NNFFA provides the Nisga'a Nation with increased funding and greater flexibility in the delivery of the agreed-upon programs and services.

2008: To improve the experiences of Aboriginal offenders and victims in the justice system, the Corrections Branch created the ***Aboriginal Programs and Relationships*** section. The Aboriginal section has developed initiatives to address the root causes of Aboriginal criminality and victimization and to engage communities and organizations in the management of Aboriginal offenders.

2006: The province signed the ***Métis Nation Relationship Accord***, agreeing to work with the Métis Nation BC (MNBC) to strengthen relationships and to improve the quality of life for Métis people. The province provides annual operational funding matched by the federal government to MNBC for government-to-government dialogue.

2006: The ***New Relationship Trust Act*** established the not-for-profit ***New Relationship Trust*** (NRT). The province provided $100 million to the NRT to support First Nations in capacity building efforts.

2006: The ***Framework Agreement for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and First Nations Community Policing Service*** (FNCPS) was signed by Canada and the province. This agreement allows a First Nation Community, or a group of First Nation Communities to enter into an agreement with the Canada and the province for the provisioning of ***community policing services*** that are culturally sensitive and responsive.

2006: The Unified Aboriginal Youth Collective (UAYC) was established with government support to unify the diverse groups of Aboriginal youth in British Columbia to address issues of common concern. In 2009-10, the UAYC and the province signed a ***memorandum of understanding*** to promote a positive relationship between Aboriginal youth and the province.

2005: The province provided significant financial resources to support the Four Host First Nations (FHFN) Society to implement their Protocol with VANOC, the federal government and other partners. The protocol ensured "unprecedented Aboriginal participation" in the 2010 Winter Olympic Games by ensuring First Nations, Inuit and Métis people across Canada had opportunities to participate. It marked the first time that indigenous peoples had been recognized as full partners in an Olympic and Paralympic Games by the International Olympic Committee.

2005: The province signed the ***Transformative Change Accord***, committing to work together to close the social and economic gaps between First Nations and other British Columbians.

2005: The ***New Relationship*** document was created, proposing new processes and structures for the province and First Nations to work together on decisions regarding the use of land and resources, as well as explore opportunities for revenue-sharing in consideration of Aboriginal rights and title interests and to help enable First Nations economic development.

Treaties

Signed ***treaties*** with six First Nations, including the first urban treaty with Tsawwassen First Nation and the first multi-nation treaty under the BC Treaty Commission process with the First Nations of the Maa-nulth Treaty.

Education

2012: Canada, the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and the Ministry of Education signed the *Tripartite Education Framework Agreement*. The agreement is intended to close the funding gap between band-operated on reserve and B.C. public schools, and formalizes the province's practice of consulting with FNESC as an obligation, consistent with the spirit of the New Relationship.

2009: The first tuition payments were made to K-12 students living off-reserve enrolled in a band-operated school, and to cover students enrolled in independent certified on-reserve schools through the ***Reciprocal Tuition Agreement*** signed between the province and the FNESC. In 2010-11, more than $6.5 million in tuition payments were made.

2009: The Industry Training Authority (ITA) released the ***Aboriginal Trades and Apprenticeship Business Plan***. The Plan outlines how the ITA will address barriers to Aboriginal participation in trades training, and also identifies roles for supporting stakeholders within each action item.

2008: Through the ***Canada – British Columbia Labour Market Agreement***, 4,302 Aboriginal individuals have participated in 24 Labour Market Agreement initiatives since 2008.

2008: Continued to partner with and support the FNESC in the ongoing implementation of English 12 First Peoples curriculum and provincial examination for that course. New courses, English 10 and 11 First Peoples, were fully implemented in September, 2010.

2008: The ***BC Aboriginal Student Award*** was created as part of the provincial government's strategy to improve Aboriginal access and achievement by reducing financial barriers to obtaining post-secondary education.

2007: Implemented ***Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Strategy*** to enhance Aboriginal learner success. This initiative has included important foundational contributions such as:

- The development and implementation of Aboriginal Service Plans by 11 public post-secondary institutions in partnership with Aboriginal communities.
- Allocated $10.5 million to create an endowment for the BC Aboriginal Student Award administered by the Irving K. Barber British Columbia Scholarship Society.
- Funded research to provide evidence that supports Aboriginal learner transitions along the post-secondary education continuum.
- Provided funding to build culturally welcoming gathering places at public post-secondary campuses.

2007: One-hundred and 92 on-going public post-secondary seats were created in 2007-08 (100) and 2008-09 (92) that specifically target Aboriginal learners in strategic program areas.

2006: Signed the Education Jurisdiction Framework Agreement, and the BC First Nation Education Agreement. In 2007, the province enacted the ***First Nations Education Act*** which formalized British Columbia's commitment to recognize First Nations' jurisdiction over the education of First Nations children in band schools of participating First Nations.

2004: Collaborated in the development and implementation of ***Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements***, which are five-year commitments made by Aboriginal communities, school districts, and the Ministry of Education to work together to improve the success and educational experience of Aboriginal students in British Columbia.

Housing and Infrastructure

2011: As of March 31, 2011, 933 units of social housing had been transferred to the ***Aboriginal Housing Management Association***.

2008: Launched the ***Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program***, providing $500,000 annually to Aboriginal non-profit organizations in nine communities across British Columbia to connect homeless people to housing, income assistance and support services in their communities within an Aboriginal context.

2008: Announced the province's commitment to work with First Nations leaders so that First Nations and their partners may bridge the digital divide in First Nations communities throughout British Columbia. Broadband connectivity will provide the electronic foundation required to share information and deliver many programs to First Nations. This announcement supports the spirit and goals of the Transformative Change Accord.

2008: The province, Canada and the First Nations Leadership Council signed a historic ***MOU***, which commits the parties to work together to improve housing for First Nations communities, individuals and families living on- and off-reserve.

2008: Undertook a ***provincewide engagement process*** involving more than 250 people from Aboriginal organizations, First Nations and other groups to inform and guide future work related to off-reserve Aboriginal housing.

2007: Through the ***Aboriginal Housing Initiative***, the province committed $50.9 million to build 200 new units of affordable off-reserve Aboriginal housing to create safe, secure and culturally appropriate housing for youth, women, elders and those struggling with addictions. Since 2006, more than 163 units of affordable housing had been created. This initiative is funded in part through the Off-Reserve Aboriginal Housing Trust, which had been transferred from the Government of Canada to the province.

2006: Completed on- and off-reserve housing needs and capacity assessment review. In addition to a literature and statistical review, Aboriginal communities and organizations around British Columbia provided information. This input is now guiding development of safe, affordable and culturally appropriate housing to British Columbia's Aboriginal people living off-reserve.

2004: The ***Provincial Homelessness Initiative*** was launched as a result of the Premier's Task Force on Homelessness, Mental Illness and Addictions. More than 4,000 new and upgraded supportive housing units and shelter beds have been created through the Provincial Homelessness initiative, which will benefit many homeless Aboriginal people.

Health

2010: The province, along with the First Nations Health Council and the Government of Canada initiated the ***Basis for a Framework Agreement on Health Governance***. The Basis Agreement outlines a staged approach for reaching a new administrative arrangement with Canada and British Columbia, where the funding, programs, services and staff of the BC Region of First Nations and Inuit Health, Health Canada, would be transferred to the control of a new First Nations health governing body (the First Nations Health Authority).

2010: The ***BC First Nations Health Directors Association*** was incorporated as one of four governance components identified in the Tripartite First Nations Health Plan. A 13-member board of directors was appointed with representation from all five health regions.

2009: the ***Provincial Health Service Authority*** (PHSA) developed an Indigenous ***Cultural Competency Training Program*** in response to the Transformative Change Accord: First Nations Health Plan action item #19: "First Nations and the province will develop a curriculum for cultural competency for health authorities."

2009: Provincial implementation of First Nations early childhood health screening programs for vision, dental and newborn hearing was initiated. In 2009-10, vision and dental screening for kindergarten age children was offered to all First Nations schools on reserve, and hearing screening was universally offered to all newborns in hospital and clinic settings at birth. Between September 2010 and June 2011, 82.8 per cent of kindergarten children who identified as Aboriginal had their eyes screened by public-health vision screeners.

2008: British Columbia was the first province in Canada to endorse ***Jordan's Principle***, which ensures First Nations children receive the health and social services care they need. A joint process document for implementation between all parties will be finalized with First Nations' input.

2007: The historic ***Tripartite First Nations Health Plan*** was signed between the province, Canada, and the First Nations Leadership Council.

2007: The province's first ***Aboriginal Health Physician Advisor***, Dr. Evan Adams, was appointed to monitor and track progress and report on the health of Aboriginal Peoples in British Columbia.

2007: The Provincial Committee on First Nations Health was established as part of a new governance structure created to ensure that First Nations have input into decisions affecting their health. The committee involved First Nations, Ministry of Health, health authorities and Health Canada in collaborative decision-making at the highest strategic health planning level.

Economic Opportunities

2010: ***The Clean Energy Act*** (CEA) received royal assent on June 3, 2010. CEA created the ***First Nation Clean Energy Business Fund*** (FNCEBF) with an initial appropriation of $5 million and with additional revenues that flow into the fund through eligible land and water rentals. As of July 2012, under $2.5 million had been provided to 53 First Nations.

2009: The province announced revenue-sharing with First Nations on new mining projects. British Columbia is the first province in Canada to share direct revenue generated from new mining projects throughout the life span of the mining operation.

2008: The ***first incremental treaty agreement*** (ITA) was signed between the province and Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation. ITAs advance treaty-related benefits for First Nations, such as land and capacity building resources. Two ITAs have been signed.

2007: Negotiations began on Crown land agreements with First Nations to share revenue from major resort proposals.

2007: Contributed $30 million to the ***Coast Opportunity Funds*** directed toward economic development opportunities for First Nations businesses involved in activities, including sustainable fisheries, forestry and tourism along the Central and North Coast.

2007: The ***Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Blueprint Strategy***, representing a partnership initiative between the province, federal government and Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia (AtBC) is now fully implemented and provides a long-term plan for the sustainable growth and development of the province's Aboriginal tourism industry and is overseen by AtBC.

2007: ***WorkBC*** was launched as an innovative new labour market strategy to ensure success in meeting key economic priorities and advancing British Columbia's global economic competitiveness. One of the goals of WorkBC is to increase Aboriginal participation and labour market success.

2006: The historic ***Coast Land Use Decisions*** for the North Coast and Central Coast protect vast areas of temperate rain forest, while providing a unique framework called ecosystem based management. These protected areas preserve some of the largest intact temperate rainforests in the world and serve to balance the needs of the environment with the need for sustainable jobs and a strong economic future for coastal communities. More than 20 First Nations have signed strategic land use planning agreements for the Central and North Coast.

2006: First Nations mountain pine beetle initiative: $8.9 million transferred to the ***First Nations Forestry Council*** to address First Nations needs with respect to the mountain pine beetle epidemic. Completed Phase I and II MPB impact assessment and response, and created communication tools for impacted First Nations communities.

The province has entered into almost 200 forestry related agreements with First Nations, including tenure opportunities and revenue sharing. Since 2003, more than $323 million in revenue-sharing and access to more than 62.1 million cubic metres of timber has been provided to First Nations across the province.

Notes

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BRITISH COLUMBIA

Ministry of
Aboriginal Relations
and Reconciliation